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## **CH2M HILL HANFORD GROUP, INC. RECEIVES \$16.3 MILLION FOR TANK FARMS WORK AT HANFORD**

The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of River Protection (ORP) has awarded \$16.3 million in fee to CH2M HILL Hanford Group, Inc. (CHG) for its Fiscal Year 2001 (FY01) work in Hanford's high-level radioactive waste tank farms. CHG, one of two prime contractors for Hanford's River Protection Project, is responsible for the operation and management of Hanford's tank farms, safely delivering the tank waste to the waste treatment facilities, and closing the tank farms.

"CHG and its subcontractors accomplished some very important work in FY01, including removal of liquids from aging single shell tanks, closing the Wyden congressional tank safety watch list – including the once infamous 'burping tank' at Hanford – and delivering the critical infrastructure for the waste treatment facilities ahead of schedule and under budget," said ORP Manager Harry Boston.

The total available fee for CHG for FY01 performance was approximately \$19.8 million. ORP informed CHG on December 14, 2001, that approximately \$7 million in available fee would be held in abeyance until DOE could validate performance data and resolve the final fee determination for FY01.

ORP originally anticipated a period of several weeks to validate performance data and resolve open issues when the letters were sent to CHG in December. ORP was able to expedite its review of the data and resolve open issues with CHG, and subsequently made a final determination on December 28 to approve the payment of the \$7 million held in abeyance. Overall, CHG earned approximately \$16.3 million of the available \$19.8 million fee for FY01.

"CHG's prompt response allowed us to quickly complete the assessment and to confirm that the performance incentives were achieved," said Boston. "I'm also encouraged by the positive steps CHG had taken by the end of FY01 to improve their health and safety posture. We believe they are on a positive path and we are looking forward to a safe and productive year in 2002."

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**Historical Note:** Highly radioactive wastes from plutonium production were piped to 177 underground tanks at DOE's Hanford Site. As a result, Hanford has 53 million gallons of chemically complex high-level radioactive waste. The majority of these tanks (149 of the 177) are single-shell tanks that are nearly 50 years old and 30 years beyond their design life. Sixty-seven of the single-shell tanks have leaked about 1 million gallons of waste. The remaining 28 newer double-shell tanks are nearing capacity and showing signs of age.

*The plan to solve this problem is straightforward: remove the waste from the tanks, vitrify the waste (turn it into stable glass) for long-term storage or disposal, and close the tank farms. Construction of Hanford's vitrification plant – the cornerstone of the tank waste cleanup – is scheduled to begin in 2002 and DOE will begin vitrifying waste in 2007. More background information on Hanford's tank waste cleanup can be found at: <http://www.hanford.gov/orp>.*

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